

2 Balmoral Terrace  
 St Vincent Place S.  
 South Melbourne.  
 5th Decr 1883

My dear Andrew,

I got your letter of 27th inst, and was glad to learn that the books had reached you & that you were pleased therewith. I speedily addressed myself to carrying out the wishes in your last; but I am not yet able to finally report. I have secured the odd vol of Kuener's "Religions of Israel" for 5/6 which is only 6d. advance on the amount you said you would close for. Of the E & J Phil Lib they have a few volumes but not those you mention. They have "The Essence of Christianity" 2 vols 4/6 a vol; I will make further enquiries as to the two you would like to get.

I am glad to hear that you got on such terms with Conway. He did not deliver the lecture entitled "London" during his course here. Mr Webster informed me recently that he intended to visit Melbourne again before leaving Australia. In fact, he may be here now, but I am not aware of

his arrival. The text of his lecture on "Barclay" appears in last Saturday's "Argus". I was about to send it you but Walter said he would send it so I left it to him.

In dubbing the latest scion "Conway" I think you have made a very happy choice; and I fully appreciate the reasons, or rather sentiments, which have led you to that choice. My list of suggested names was, as you must have readily seen, "earnest wed with sport". I did not expect, for instance, that W & C would have been so cruel as to make a little "Pfleiderer" of him.

Walter and I intended on Prince of Wales' birthday to go down the Bay to Portsea, Looe & Queenscliff in the "Golden Crown". We appointed to meet at the Sandridge Railway Pier. After toiling through some hot and hideous sandy wastes between South Melbourne and Sandridge I reached the Pier just in time to see the steamer going from the wharf. I didn't see Walter, but expected he was on board. Just as I was about to go to Melbourne by the Sandridge train I met him on the platform - also too late. As a last resource we boarded a large Collier, the "Kendus" bound on an excursion

to Geelong; and for the third time I visited the lively "Riot". Soon after arriving there it commenced to rain dismally, and continued so off and on, all day. The only fun afforded came from the fact that we had a detachment, about 20, of the Salvation Army on board who made themselves particularly vocal on the return. An opposition party of the Unredeemed joined themselves, and we were heated to some interesting matters. Several knots of people in the steamers were loudly discussing theology; and others attacked the Salvationists of whom half were respectable women, in a most insulting style. The crew of the assailants and disputants the booming of the band, and the shuffling of the dancing filled in the time. Two ladies of pliant virtue, most elaborately bedizened attracted my attention. I saw them many times drinking neat brandy at the deck bars, with the usual consequences. Walter says that gambling is the chief vice of this place. If so, drinking is a good

second. Walter and I went on another expedition which occupied last Saturday afternoon and Sunday. This was of a far different character to the other, and one that I could wish you had joined us in. This was a pilgrimage to Adam Lindsay Gordon's grave. On Saturday afternoon we went

to Bugblon Beach, and journeyed to the spot  
in the ti-tree scrub where rang<sup>out</sup> the fatal  
shot which closed his mortal career. I  
took close note of the surroundings. We  
found that the Cemetery was farther away  
than Walter had thought; and therefore  
this pilgrimage was adjourned to the  
following day. On Sunday we took train  
for North Bugblon; and, after some trouble,  
we found the Burial ground which is about  
a mile from the Station. The country is  
very fine about here, and puts me a little  
in mind of New Town as viewed from the  
Augusta Road. The Cemetery is a large  
tract of land thickly covered with short gum  
trees, and gives no idea of its character till  
you are quite close to it when you may see  
a white memorial glistening here and  
there between the trees. After some search  
we found the grave in the Church of England  
section. It consists of a blue-stone base  
and pedestal from which springs a bluestone  
fluted column shattered at the top, and  
bearing upward the top a large marble  
bearing a wreath. On each side of the base ~~the~~  
is a shield-shaped white marble entablature.  
On the Northern one is inscribed in black  
letters "The Poet Gordon. Died June 24 1870.  
Aged 57 years." On the West "Bush Ballads  
and Galloping Rhymes". On the South "Ashtaroth".  
On the East "Sea Spray and Smoke Drift". The

monument is about 10 feet high. There is no railing of any kind round it; and there is a much worn foot track round the base - a silent memorial of the many who led by various motives have gazed upon the last earthly resting place of the Bard.

Willie was curious to know in his last why I took no part in the Intercolonial Chess Match. For his information I may as well speak about this matter here. The Victorian Chess Association selected a number of players to practice for the match. I was one of these. The association at last decided upon 6 players, and the seventh one was left open. The contest for this at last narrowed down to Hamel, Stephen and myself. I defeated Hamel who retired without playing Stephen. In the series of games I played with Stephen I defeated him at first at the rate of 2 to 1; but he bettered his position at the finish, although I still remained to the good, and could fairly claim to have outmanoeuvred him. At this stage I became aware of a secret treaty between Stephen and

the Association which was to the effect that it had all along been cut and dried that Stephen could play if he elected to without regard to any reverse he might sustain during practice. It struck me that here was a very lively state of affairs. Stephen had all along intended to play; and I had been only used much as Quisp in the Old Curiosity Shop - used to use the wooden Admiral - a block to chop at - to sharpen the <sup>facility</sup> ~~weapon~~ of a player who all along knew he would play whatever I did with him. After this discovery I retired. Esling and Stanley two players from the County who played in the Match were much dissatisfied at my not taking part; and a number of the City players expressed the same thing. The fact is Stephen is an old member of the Melbourne Club and has done much for Victorian Chess and is very much liked - He has <sup>also</sup> played in these matches before, and all these circumstances combined with the fact that the Victorian

Association feel assured the other  
6 players were so strong as to  
make a matter of indifference  
who we. 7<sup>th</sup> man was, led to  
Stephen's admission to the list.  
Personally I am not much concerned  
about the matter. I believe Stephen  
is a good sort of fellow; and I was  
only annoyed a little at first by  
the suppressio veri which characterised  
the proceedings.

On my return from Geelong on  
Prince of Wales' Birthday I went up  
to town and visited the Telegraph  
office where the match was being played.  
I had to witness a very painful  
spectacle. This was between 10 & midnight.  
The last game to remain undecided  
was that between Wicker & Smith.  
Wicker was as drunk as a boiled  
oat, and sat moaning at his board  
with glazed eyes and open mouth.  
During the day he had a won game.  
When he could have drawn easily.  
Finally he lost it; and notwithstanding  
his benevolent attempts in the Australasian  
to explain away the matter, those who  
can read between the lines know what

paralyzed his brain. This is the second time he has served them so. I am very sorry. Wisper is an able man. Why does the <sup>Worse</sup> Devil clutch so fiercely at those who seem so often to be bent with that terrible susceptibility to his thrall?

I have lately taken part at the request of a number of players in the formation of a club with the result that a club called "The Victorian Chess & Draughts Club" has been started, and they have done me the honor of electing me Vice President. This Club has two great objects - one to provide draughts players with an association which they have not at present - and the other to practically protest against the forming of ~~what~~ cards with chess as at the Melbourne Club. The Club will, I think be a success. It has a splendid room, elegantly furnished, and is in the most central part of Melbourne.

My health remains good, but the hot weather for a whole week the week before last was a little trying.

Please remember me affectionately to Mrs B and the Boys and with kisses from Budder Joe for the little folk Believe me Always affectionately yours  
G. W. Norton